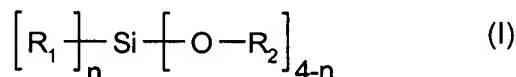


In the Claims:

1. (currently amended) A coating composition comprising

- a) an organic film-forming binder, and
- b) an inorganic additive with a base, which inorganic additive is of small particle size dispersed in an aqueous or alcoholic solvent prepared by a process which comprises the hydrolysis of a metal alcoholate, metal halide or a compound of the formula I



in which

R₁ is C₁-C₈alkyl, C₅-C₈cycloalkyl, phenyl or C₁-C₄alkyl substituted phenyl;

R₂ is C₁-C₈alkyl, and

n is 0, 1, 2 or 3; ~~with a base.~~

2. (original) A coating composition according to claim 1, wherein the coating is transparent.

3. (currently amended) A coating composition according to claim 1, in which the metal of either the metal alcoholate or metal halide is beryllium, aluminium, titanium, chromium, iron, zinc, zirconium, niobium or cerium.

4. (original) A coating composition according to claim 1, in which the alcoholic solvent is methanol, ethanol, n-propanol, isopropanol, n-butanol, isobutanol or tert-butanol.

5. (original) A coating composition according to claim 1, in which the base is an amine of the formula II



wherein

R₃, R₄ and R₅ independently of one another are hydrogen or C₁-C₈alkyl.

- 6. (previously presented)** A coating composition according to claim 1, in which the particle size of the inorganic additive is in the range of from 2 to 300 nanometers.
- 7. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, wherein the hydrolysis takes place at a temperature of from -20 to 80°C.
- 8. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, in which n is 0.
- 9. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, in which component (b) is a hydrolyzed compound of the formula I wherein, R₂ is ethyl and n is 0, with aqueous ammonia.
- 10. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, wherein the coating composition is a paint.
- 11. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, wherein the coating composition is an aqueous paint.
- 12. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, wherein component (a) is an epoxy resin, a polyurethane resin, an amino resin, an acrylic resin, an acrylic copolymer resin, a polyvinyl resin, a phenolic resin, a styrene/butadiene copolymer resin, a vinyl/acrylic copolymer resin, a polyester resin, a UV-curable resin, an alkyd resin or a mixture of two or more of these resins or an aqueous basic or acidic dispersion of these resins or mixtures of these resins or an aqueous emulsion of these resins or mixtures of these resins.
- 13. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, additionally comprising one or more components taken from the class consisting of pigments, dyes, fillers, flow control agents, dispersants, thixotropic agents, adhesion promoters, antioxidants, light stabilizers and curing catalysts.
- 14. (original)** A coating composition according to claim 1, wherein the solid content of component (b) is present in an amount of from 0.01 to 20 % based on the weight of the overall solids content of the coating composition.

15. **(previously presented)** A process for the preparation of a coating composition according to claim 1, which comprises mixing a first component (a) with component (b); distillation of the solvent under normal pressure at a temperature range of 50 to 140°C until most or all of the solvent is evaporated; and optionally, adding a second component (a).

16. **(original)** A process according to claim 15, wherein the first component (a) is a polyol and the second component (a) is a polyisocyanate; or the first component (a) is a polyacrylate and the second component (a) is melamine.

17. **(original)** A process for protecting a substrate, which comprises applying thereto a coating composition according to claim 1 and then drying and/or curing it.

18. **(original)** A process for preparing a reinforced coating with improved scratch resistance on a surface, which comprises treating this surface with a coating composition according to claim 1 and then drying and/or curing it.

19. **(cancelled)**